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## LACQUER DECORATION.

ANY one who is not thoroughly accustomed to the work of decoration should make a sketch first of his subject, and color it with water colors; this may appear as though we were advocating the plan of doing the work over twice, but the gain is well worth the little extra time and trouble expended. With the colored sketch before him he can judge of his effects, alter a tint here or there, warm or cool his hues, strengthen his deepest shades, and heighten or lower the brilliance of each, harmonizing the whole until he secures the end at which he was aiming; not, indeed, raising his ideal, for that is never reached by the true artist, but rising as nearly to it as is given to those who honestly seek to do their best. For the wood work of rooms lacquer painting will be much admired, not that we propose to do away with our present doors and wainscoting and to substitute lacquer in their place, but for paneling it would be extremely pretty. With any rich colored paint the lacquer panels would do well, say a warm chocolate, then the upholstering of the room might be of a dark blue color. Let us consider such a room for a space: the wainscot should be painted in three shades of reddish brown, the deepest shade being next the floor, a lighter one next, and the beading at the top should be done in three shades of brown. The door is to be painted after the same style, lacquer panels being let in; the decoration on these consists of various flowers, a modified orange color prevailing throughout. The narrow shutter panels of lacquer bear a design of passion flowers, with the golden fruit depending from the branches in every stage of ripeness.

The floor is stained oak, with Persian rugs lying about on it, the comfortable, low, lounging chairs are covered with dark blue silken damask, the curtains of the same rich material. A screen of lacquer stands in front of the tiled hearth, and some brackets hang in the corners of the room, the doors of which are paneled with lacquer, the shelves supporting blue and orange-colored china vases, which stand relieved against the cream-colored walls. A deep frieze surrounds the upper portion of the walls, and the ceiling is painted in the centre and at the corners with an intricate design of brilliant colors, gold and blue being the most pronounced amongst them. Such a room, we can but think, must satisfy the most fastidious taste.

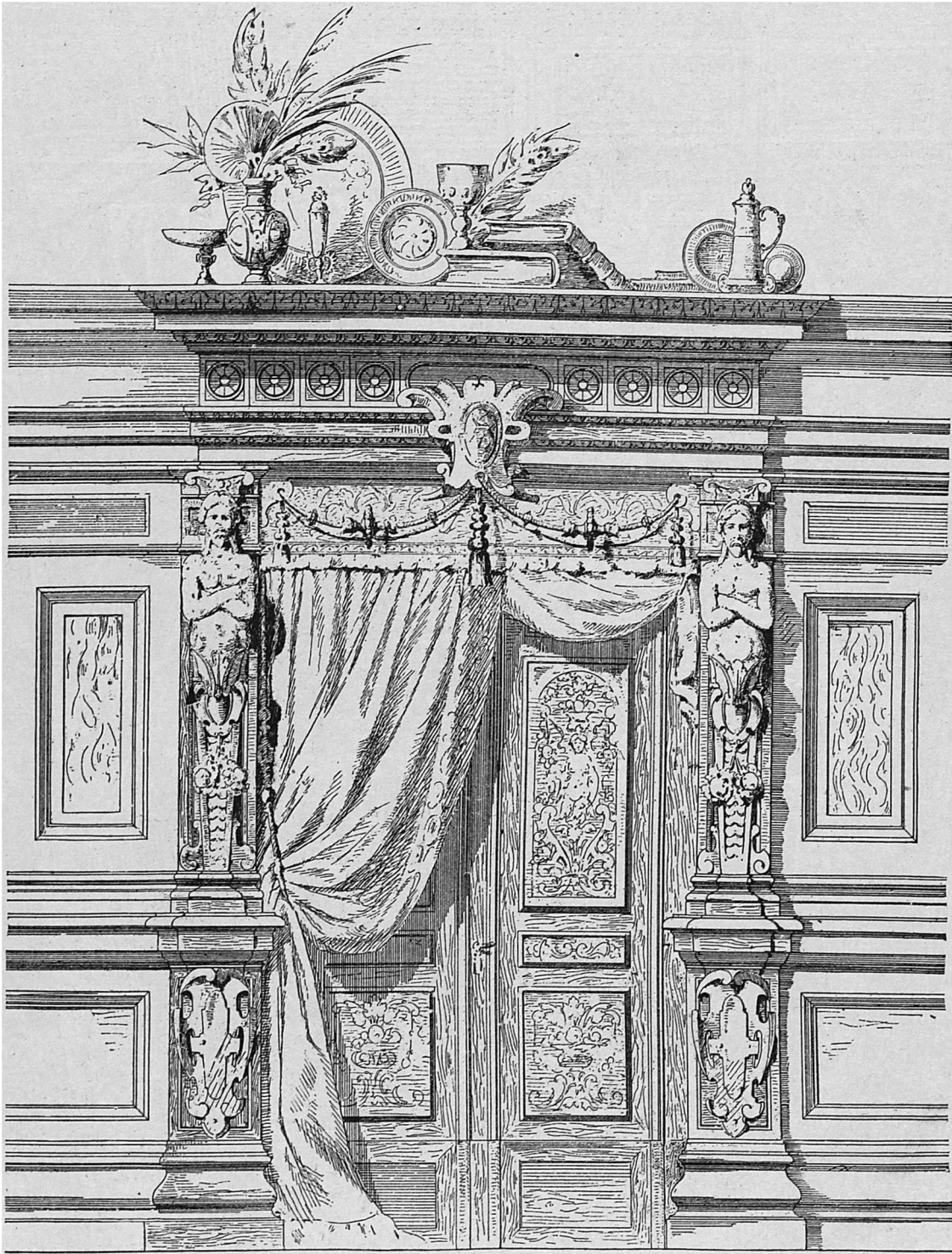
For fire screens lacquer wood seems specially adapted; they are made in three folds, each being decorated with a different subject. Water plants, with just a few lines to suggest the water, a little feathery foliage, and a bird or two skimming across the panel, is a favorite theme. Carry out the same idea in the remaining panels, but vary it as much as possible. The contrary side may be left plain, or slightly ornamented with almond flowers, apple blossoms, or any light greenery that may be fancied. All paintings on lacquer wood must be sent to be lacquered; this, while polishing the surface, intensifies the brilliancy of the colors.—*The Painter.*

Rugs of Chinese matting are pretty for summer houses.

A NEW drawing ruler, of very great value to artists and architects, has been made.

## PAINTING ON EARTHENWARE.

PAINTING on earthenware has become an exceedingly favorite recreation of late years, the more so, for the marvelous transformations it effects in the commonest descriptions of ware commonly remarkable for excellence of form, as in articles intended for the kitchen and the dairy. A large cream jug may be thus made to appear a superb flower pot in a hall or on a landing; a pipkin as a flower vase, and a pumpkin jar as the holder of a flowering bulb. Ordinary flower pots may be made to share admiration with the flowers they hold, and ordinary waste pipes converted into umbrella stands. If the articles be partially glazed, so much the better; the rest of the surface may be coated with common glue. The grounding consists of gum dammar dissolved in common benzine. Powder colors mixed with gold size on the palette serve for the ornamentation.



ARRANGEMENT OF PORTIERE AND DOOR DECORATION.

## HINTS ON CABINET WORK.

A LARGE proportion of the men working in our cabinet shops seem to have ideas and plans connected with their ordinary daily work which, though not absolutely wrong, are so far removed from the correct method, and sometimes so much opposed to nature as to cause a great deal of extra labor and annoyance. Amongst these mistaken notions might be mentioned the various plans adopted by them to bring wood when "cast" or twisted back to the proper, or rather the required, condition. It is very often found to be the case that wood which in the board or plank is perfectly straight, or which at least appears to be so, will twist and wind in every conceivable manner when freed from restraint, and cut up into long narrow lengths, or cross-cut into short broad panels. When wood is very badly twisted—i. e., when it is in what is technically termed "winding"—the only remedy is

to plane off the high corners, and thus make it perfectly true by reducing the thickness. But if it be simply cast, one side being hollow and the other round, the defect may be easily got over. If the man, by working on some other portion of the material required for his job, can let the defective pieces stand by for a day or two, then by placing the wood "hollow side" down on a plane surface, or by putting two such boards one on top of the other, with the hollow sides facing each other, the wood will be drawn straight without any more trouble on the part of the man.

It is always best, when possible, to work up the wood in its natural state as, even if the tendency to cast be overcome previous to working it, there is always the probability of its returning to its normal condition. Some men, when pressed for time, heat the round side on the stove. This does indeed make the wood straight, but there is great risk of the wood opening and splitting

under this toasting treatment, and this liability is very much increased if the wood be at all shaky. If required, the wood can at once be straightened without this risk by damping the hollow side with water, when the expansion of the fiber on that side pulls it straight. It sometimes happens that a piece of wood of some considerable width, such as a carcass end or a wardrobe panel, has to be reduced from three-quarter inch to half inch thickness. If this superfluous wood be all taken off one side, that side will become hollow, whereas if it be taken off equally on both sides the wood remains as before.

In veneering panels, etc., it is always best to veneer on the outside, that is, the side opposite the heart side, the reason for this being that veneer is apt to swell with the glue being laid on, and must, therefore, contract after it is fixed. As the heart side has always a decided tendency to curl, the two forces counteract each other, and the wood remains the same. For this same reason it is always best to inlay on the outside.

To some people these may appear to be very trivial matters, but it is by keeping these and other little points in mind that a job may be turned out with more comfort to the man and satisfaction to the master; and these hints, if carefully attended to, will frequently save time and expense.—*Amateur Mechanics.*

FRINGES are used on table cloths and napkins.

## PAINTING AND GILDING POTTERY.

PAINTING and gilding on pottery is done with ordinary colors and the best gold leaf. Washing will destroy the surface, but the article painted may be handled and cleaned. A thin coating of best gilder's size is followed by a coating of flake white color, to be smoothed off by a badger's brush, and when dry rubbed with very fine glass paper. The surface is then resized with gold size. The leaf is now applied, being first warmed before the fire. Care must be taken that the edges overlap. The leaf is to be slightly rubbed with cotton wool. It is burnished with an agate burnisher rubbed over the waxed surface of paper placed over the gilding. The outline of the design is transferred to the article with red tracing paper, a fine pencil lightly pressed being used. The painting is executed in ordinary oil colors. The gilding and painting may be left unvarnished or covered with a coat of mastic varnish.